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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

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Exilis domus eſt, ubi non & multa ſuperſunt,
Et dominum fallunt, & proſunt furibus.—— HOR.

To Mr. FITZ ADAM.

SIR,

THERE is a ſpecies of luxury, which, though you muſt often have obſerved, I do not find that you have hitherto taken notice of. I mean that extravagance of expence, which people of all ranks and conditions are daily running into in the article of furniture. In the houſes of the great (not to mention the profuſion of French ornament and coſtly glitter of every room) the meaneſt utenſils of the kitchen are all of plate. But it is not upon the follies of other people that I am going to deſcant; it is of myſelf and my country houſe, or rather

ther of my wife and her villa, that I intend to be particular. The houſe I am ſpeaking of, together with a very conſiderable eſtate, was left me by an uncle in the city, with whom I had lived from the age of ſixteen. As he intended me for trade, you may be ſure he gave me no other education (a little ſchool learning excepted) than what was neceſſary for a compting-houſe. But finding myſelf, at his death, in poſſeſſion of a plentiful fortune, I reſolved to commence gentleman; and accordingly diſpoſed of my effects in buſineſs, and took a houſe at the other end of the town.

HERE I became acquainted with a lady of quality, who, though ſhe had the higheſt notions of birth, yet from ſo trifling a circumſtance as want of fortune, condeſcended to give me her hand, notwithſtanding the meanneſs of my family and the difference of our educations. As I thought myſelf extremely honoured by an alliance with ſo great a lady, I gave the management of every thing into her hands, and grew as indolent as if I had been a man of real faſhion. My wife was a woman of exceeding FINE TASTE, as it is called; or in other words, one who liked to have every thing about her in the neweſt and moſt expenſive manner. As ſoon as I brought her to my country houſe, I thought ſhe would have fainted away at the ſight of my furniture; the whole of it (to uſe her own words) was ſo frightful, ſo odious, and ſo out of TASTE! Her upholſterer muſt be ſent for that inſtant, for there was no enduring life in the midſt of ſo much antiquated lumber. I forgot to tell you that I had entirely new-furniſhed the houſe about three months before; but though every thing was extremely good and neat, I muſt do her the juſtice to own, there was very little in it but what was of real uſe. Early the next day down comes the

the upholſterer. "Lord, Mr. Kifang, ſays ſhe, I "am glad you are come. Pray reſt yourſelf a little; "but I am afraid you can't find a chair fit for a chriſ- "tian to ſit down upon. Such ſeats! ſuch backs! ſuch "legs! ſuch———but they are ſo of a piece with the "reſt of the furniture!——Dear Kifang, I am glad "you are come!" So without waiting for his reply, or ſuffering him to ſit down, ſhe conducted him through all the apartments, except the offices, which indeed ſhe has never once condeſcended to viſit ſince her becoming miſtreſs of my family.

Mr. Kifang, who is ſaid to be of Chineſe extraction, and who muſt be allowed to underſtand his buſineſs as well as any man alive, agreed perfectly with her la'ſhip, and obſerved, "that ſuch out-of-faſhion "things might do well enough for a citizen; but that "perſons of quality and diſtinction, who had a TASTE "and all that, ſhould have ſomething foreign and ſu- "perb, and quite in another-gueſs ſort of a manner." In ſhort, ſir, by the indefatigable zeal of this Chineſe upholſterer, in about four months my houſe was entirely new-furniſhed; but ſo diſguiſed and altered, that I hardly knew it again. There is not a bed, a table, a chair, or even a grate that is not twiſted into ſo many ridiculous and groteſque figures, and ſo decorated with the heads, beaks, wings and claws of birds and beaſts, that Milton's

Gorgons, and hydra's and chimæra's dire

are not to be compared with them. Every room is completely covered with a Wilton carpet; I ſuppoſe to ſave the floors, which are all new-laid, and in the moſt expenſive manner. In each of theſe rooms is a pair or two of ſtands, ſupported by different figures of men or beaſts, on which are placed branches of Chelſea china, repreſenting lions, bears and other animals, holding in their mouths or paws ſprigs of bay, orange or myrtle; among

among the leaves of which are fixed ſockets for the reception of wax candles, which by diſperſing the light among the foliage, I own, make a very agreeable appearance. But I can ſee no uſe for the lions and bears: to ſay the truth, I cannot help thinking it a little unnatural; for it is well known that all kinds of ſavages are afraid of fire. But this I ſubmit to you; having obſerved of late ſeveral wild beaſts exhibited on the ſtage, without their ſhewing the leaſt ſurprize at the lamps, or even at the loud ſhouts of applauſe which have been beſtowed upon them from the galleries. The upper apartments of my houſe, which were before handſomely wainſcotted, are now hung with the richeſt Chineſe and India paper, where all the powers of fancy are exhauſted in a thouſand fantaſtic figures of birds, beaſts and fiſhes, which never had exiſtence. And what adds to the curioſity is, that the fiſhes are ſeen flying in the air, or perching upon the trees; which puts me in mind of a paſſage I learnt at ſchool (for I have not abſolutely forgot my latin)

Delphinum appingit ſylvis.———

the oddneſs of which, I ſuppoſe, was the reaſon of my remembering it.

The beſt, or as my wife calls it, the ſtate bedchamber, is furniſhed in a manner that has half undone me. The hangings are white ſatten, with French flowers and artificial moſs ſtuck upon it with gum, and interſperſed with ten thouſand ſpangles, beads and ſhells. The bed ſtands in an alcove, at the top of which are painted Cupids ſtrewing flowers and ſprinkling perfumes. This is divided from the room by two twiſted pillars, adorned with wreaths of flowers, and intermixed with ſhell-work. In this apartment there is a cabinet of moſt curious workmanſhip, highly finiſhed with ſtones, gems and ſhells, diſpoſed in ſuch a manner as to repreſent ſeveral

ſorts

ſorts of flowers. The top of this cabinet is adorned with a prodigious pyramid of china of all colours, ſhapes and ſizes. At every corner of the room are great jars filled with dried leaves of roſes and jeſſamine. The chimney-piece alſo (and indeed every one in the houſe) is covered with immenſe quantities of china of various figures; among which are Talapoins and Bonzes, and all the religious orders of the eaſt.

THE next room that preſents itſelf is my wife's dreſſing room; but I will not attempt to deſcribe it to you minutely, it is ſo full of trinkets. The walls are covered round with looking-glaſs, interſperſed with pictures made of moſs, butterflies and ſea weeds. Under a very magnificent Chineſe canopy ſtands the toilette, furniſhed with a ſet of boxes of gilt plate, for combs, bruſhes, paints, paſtes, patches, pomatums, powders white, grey and blue, bottles of hungary, lavender and orange-flower water, and in ſhort, all the apparatus for diſguiſing beauty. Here ſhe conſtantly pays her devotions two hours every morning; but what kind of divinity ſhe adores, may be ſafer for you to gueſs than for me to tell. By this time I imagine you will conceive my houſe to be much fuller of furniture than my head. Alas! ſir, I am but a huſband, and my wife is a woman of quality. But I could ſubmit with ſome degree of patience to all this folly and expence, if my children (and I have two fine boys and a girl) were not either kept cloſe priſoners in the nurſery, or driven into the kitchen among the ſervants, to prevent their playing about the rooms, and making havock of the crockery.

I HAVE a thouſand other curioſities in my houſe, of which I neither know the uſes nor the names. But I cannot help mentioning the gravel walks, rivers, groves and temples, which on a grand day make their appearance at the deſſert. For you are not to ſuppoſe that all this